

This I Believe

Based on NPR's long-running and very popular This I Believe series, students pick a formative event in their lives that impacted a profound, personal belief. We have found that often this is a painful or embarrassing event. Strong classroom community is critical.

This project covers all four components of language arts.

This I Believe Essays and Podcasts

Step 1 Immersion

http://thisibelieve.org/essay/46931/	Beatles
http://thisibelieve.org/essay/14338/	Asperger
http://thisibelieve.org/essay/12393/	power of philosophy
http://thisibelieve.org/essay/4205/	tomorrow

Step 2 Writing

This I Believe website: <http://thisibelieve.org/>

Middle school curriculum: [ThisIBelieveMiddleSchoolCurriculum.pdf](#)

High school curriculum: [ThisIBelieveCurriculumhigh school.pdf](#)

Basic principles: (From website brochure)

Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Your story need not be heart-warming or gut-wrenching—it can even be funny—but it should be *real*. Consider moments when your belief was formed, tested, or changed. Make sure your story ties to the essence of your daily life philosophy and to the shaping of your beliefs.

Be brief: Your statement should be between 350 and 500 words.

The shorter length forces you to focus on the belief that is central to your life.

Name your belief: If you can't name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about belief. Rather than writing a list, consider focusing on one core belief.

Be positive: Say what you *do* believe, not what you *don't* believe. Avoid statements of religious dogma, preaching, or editorializing.

Be personal: Make your essay about you; speak in the first person.

Try reading your essay aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.

Framed paragraph:

I believe in (the power of)..... name the value. Elaborate in a sentence or two.

Tell a positive, personal story about HOW you came to this belief/value

Restate value.....This I believe.

Step 3 Coach the Voices

Kids need lots and lots of practice with each other, to the mirror, to an adult

Step 4 Record

Audacity is one of the 3 student apps on netbook. You will also need dlame 3 encoder loaded as well. Headphones with attached mic are very useful.

Step 5 Upload and Podcast

Make an account in a podcast hosting site.

Convert to mp3 file.

Make into a podcast

1. iTunes to store to podcasts to submit a podcast
2. Link to hosting site
3. iTunes will take 24-48 hours to activate